

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COPENH 00999 111840 Z

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 L-03 NSC-10

PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 CU-04 NIC-01 RSR-01 /116 W

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R 111613 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6910

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E. O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: ELAB PINT DA

SUBJECT: LABOR CONFLICT INVOLVING AMERICAN COMPANY BECOMES
POLITICAL ISSUE

BEGIN SUMMARY: REFUSAL LAST JANUARY BY SMALL AMERICAN COM-
PUTER MANUFACTURER TO SIGN LABOR CONTRACT WITH DANISH UNIONS HAS
PROVOKED MINOR POLITICAL TEMPEST. PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF
JUSTICE HAVE REFUSED TO DISMISS INDICTMENTS AGAINST UNION OFFICIALS
WHO ILEGALLY BLOCKADED COMPANY PREMISES, DESPITE FIFTEEN- MINUTE
SYMPATHY STRIKES MAY 10 BY SEVERAL THOUSAND WORKERS. END SUMMARY.

1. THIRTEEN EMPLOYEES OF HOPE COMPUTER CORPORATION AT HADSUND,
JUTLAND, STRUCK JANUARY 2 TO FORCE FIRM'S DANISH MANGER,
T. BARSOE- CARNFELDT, TO SIGN LABOR CONTRACT WITH DANISH GENERAL
AND SPECIAL WORKERS UNION (DASF) AND WITH WOMEN WORKERS UNION.
CARNFELDT REFUSED, ALLEGING THAT STATUTES OF AMERICAN PARENT FIRM
PROHIBITED UNION CONTRACTS. WHEN CARNFELDT HIRED STRIKE- BREAKERS,
LOCAL DASF UNION ORGANIZED 400- MAN BLOCKADE OF THE HOPE PLANT
NIGHT OF JAN 10-11, PHYSICALLY PREVENTING 30 EMPLOYEES AND EIGHT

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VISITING BUSINESSMEN FROM LEAVING PREMISES UNTIL EARLY

MORNING HOURS, AT WHICH POINT CARNFELDT SIGNED PROVISIONAL LABOR CONTRACT. LOCAL POLICE APPEARED SHORTLY THEREAFTER AND DISPERSED THE BLOCKADE.

2. ALTHOUGH CARNFELDT SUBSEQUENTLY CLAIMED LABOR CONTRACT WAS INVALID BECAUSE SIGNED " UNDER DURESS", MANAGING DIRECTOR HENRY HOPE OF AMERICAN PARENT COMPANY (HOPE INDUSTRIES, PHILADELPHIA, PENN.) APPEARED ON SCENE JAN 22 AND ACCEPTED LABOR CONTRACT CARNFELDT HAD SIGNED. HENRY HOPE ALSO DEFUSED SOME ANTI- AMERICAN ASPECTS OF INCIDENT BY 1) PUBLICLY DENYING CARNFELDT' S ASSERTION THAT AMERICAN PARENT CORPORATION PROHIBITED UNION CONTRACTS, 2) AFFILIATING COMPANY WITH DANISH ASSOCIATION OF METAL EMPLOYERS (AME), AND 3) TRANSFERRING CARNFELDT TO NEW JOB OUTSIDE OF DENMARK. (COMMENT: IN DISCUSSION AT THAT TIME WITH AME REPRESENTATIVE, LABATT INFORMED THAT CARNFELDT WAS " SHARP OPERATOR", NOT HIGHLY REGARDED BY OTHER METAL EMPLOYERS. ON OTHER HAND, BLOCKADE ACTION BY LOCAL UNION MEMBERS WAS PROBABLY INSPIRED BY COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP OF DASF' S REGIONAL ORGANIZATION IN AARHUS, SINCE ACTION WAS NOT AUTHORIZED, NOR SUBSEQUENTLY OFFICIALLY ENDORSED, BY DASF LEADERSHIP IN COPENHAGEN.)

3. " HOPE COMPUTER CASE" AROUSED NATION- WIDE INTEREST, WITH DANISH TV PRESENTING EXTENSIVE FILM COVERAGE OF BLOCKADE INCIDENT, AND LEFT- WING LABOR PRESS (COMMUNIST LAND OG FOLK AND PEOPLES SOCIALIST MINAVISEN) EXPLOITED IT AS EXAMPLE OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION' S ANTI- UNION TACTICS. NEW TWIST WAS ADDED WHEN PROSECUTING AUTHORITIES SUBPOENAED TV- FILM TO IDENTIFY PARTICIPANTS AND TO PROVE THAT BLOCKADE, INTENDED TO KEEP STRIKE- BREAKERS OFF PREMISES, HAD INSTEAD BEEN USED TO PREVENT EMPLOYEES FROM DEPARTING. DESPITE PROTESTS FROM JOURNALIST' S UNION AND WILDCAT STRIKES IN VARIOUS PLANTS, DANISH COURT UPHELD USE OF TV- FILM AS INVESTIGATIVE AID, AND INDICTMENTS AGAINST SEVEN LOCAL UNION OFFICIALS AND TWO BLOCKADE LEADERS WERE ISSUED IN EARLY MAY. INDICTMENTS CHARGE VIOLATION OF CRIMINAL CODE' S PARAGRAPH 2 61 (ILLEGAL DEPRIVATION OF A PERSON' S FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT) WHICH CARRIES MAXIMUM SENTENCE OF FOUR YEARS.

4. DASF CHAIRMAN EJLER SONDER, WITH TRADE UNION DELEGATION FROM NORTH JUTLAND, CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE K. AKSEL NIELSEN MAY 10 TO REQUEST LATTER TO EXERCISE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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HIS STATUTORY RIGHT TO DISMISS INDICTMENTS. TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH THIS MEETING, FIFTEEN- MINUTE WILDCAT STRIKES WERE SCHEDULED AT SEVERAL INDUSTRIAL PLANTS THROUGHOUT DENMARK, WHERE LOCAL UNION SECTIONS ARE UNDER COMMUNIST OR LEFT SOCIALIST LEADERSHIP. JORGENSEN AND NIELSEN INFORMED DELEGATION THAT INDICTMENTS WOULD
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